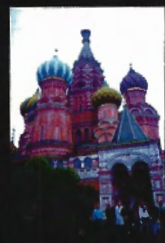


Leland Earls

Revived Roman Empire



Fact or Fiction?

edited by Jon R. Welker

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BY LELAND EARLS • *EDITED BY* JON R. WELKER

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Dear Friends in Christ,

I will deal as usual primarily with prophetic matters relating to events taking place that are rapidly fulfilling God's prophetic Scriptures. Since my ministry is primarily that of a "prophet," I must *first* of all obey God's command as given in *Isaiah 58:1*:

"Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show My people their transgressions, and the house of Jacob their sins."

Secondly; as a teaching prophet, "unveil" the truth of God's Holy Word as best I can under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. *Thirdly*, impress upon those who read the *paramount principle* that any study of God's truth in the Scriptures (including prophetic subjects) must have a *practical bearing* upon the *way one lives*, one's daily manner of life-conduct, words, attitudes, and relationships with others. The present impact on one's life of the study of future prophetic events is emphasized by Peter in *II Peter 3:11*:

"Seeing then that all these things (chemical elements) shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation (manner of life) and godliness...."

We should never study the Word of God *merely* to gain more head knowledge, or to *just satisfy* one's *curiosity* about a subject. With knowledge comes *responsibility*. To whom much

is given, much is *required* (Lk. 12:48). We dare not “trifle” with sacred things. To do so is to walk on dangerous ground, and to “invite” the dealings of God. Notice the *practical import* of the Scriptures as given by Paul in *II Timothy 3:16*:

“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine (teaching), for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect (mature), thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”

We study the Scriptures (the “written Word”) because *through them* we come to *know* the “living Word” (Jesus Christ) WHO ALONE has the power to GIVE us Life and also to CHANGE our lives. And this is the “bottom line,” so to speak, that I need to ask myself: “Am I *spending enough time* in the written Word that I am increasingly being *drawn* into an *intimate relationship* with the Living Word, that His LOVE and POWER is *changing* me into His image?” Probably the most vivid metaphor Jesus ever used to express His *utmost purpose* for us is given in *John 15*. He declares that He has chosen us to “go” (forth) into every situation of life “*bearing* (manifesting) *fruit*” (15:16), “*more fruit*” (15:2), and “*much fruit*” (15:5), and that such “fruit” should *remain* (in us) (15:16,11), as well as bring *glory* to the Father (15:8). Beloved, “fruit” is simply a metaphor for *character qualities* which the Lord purposes to develop in us. But notice the emphasis on the necessity of “abiding” (remaining, continuing) IN HIM, and letting HIS WORDS “*abide*” (remain, continue) IN US, in order for this fruit to be produced (15:1-5,7,10-12). But HOW can this be accomplished unless we *spend much time studying, prayer-reading and meditating* in the Word of God. This emphasis on reading the Word is presented as a “backdrop” to help with the following.

A long-time reader asked a *pertinent* question with reference to remarks I once made. She asked: “Do you feel it is

‘negative’ to expose Satan and his evil works?” My answer to her is as follows, in order to clarify my position: “No, I do *not* believe it is ‘negative’ to expose Satan and his evil works. Exposing sin and calling people to repentance is not ‘negative,’ yet some ‘Christians’ think it is. We are to watch and warn of Satan’s devices, even as Paul says in *II Corinthians 2:11*: ‘***we are not ignorant of his* (Satan’s) *devices.*’ Yet, so many Christians are ignorant.” What I wrote was to exhort and warn Christians to get their *priorities right*. Some things are more important than others, and we have only so much time. I find some Christians spending more time reading literature about what Satan is doing, than reading the Word of God to find out what God is doing and seeking to line their lives up with His ways. It is the difference between being preoccupied with *symptoms*, or being preoccupied with the *solution*. The many evils rampant in our society are merely *symptomatic* of a nation that has turned its back on God, and thrown out God’s moral standards for “situation ethics.” The nation, however, only *reflects* what has *already happened* in the *churches*.**

The answer is calling the churches and Christians to *repentance* (as Jesus did in His messages to the 7 churches of Asia in *Rev. 2 & 3*). It is not the sins of the world that are leading our nation to destruction, but the *sins* of the *churches*. We *lament* our “permissive society,” but never forget that “permissiveness” by teaching “situation ethics” began in the churches! Of many churches (and most ministers), it could be said, quoting from Jesus: “***ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God*” (*Matt. 22:29*). The solution is Christians who are diligent enough to put in the time in *prayer*, to *seek God*, to get *back* to the *Scriptures* and the *power* of God, that the church (the true Body of Christ) might become the *mighty instrument* in the hand of God that He purposes. But “lazy” Christians “*at ease in Zion*” (*Amos 6:1*) would rather blame all our “woes” on what’s wrong in the world,**

rather than see (and do something about) what's wrong in the church. This is why I was warning about the trap of what I called "scapegoatism" – it is so easy to point fingers at the *symptoms* of our diseased society, rather than seeking the cause and doing something about it. Only a *restored* and *empowered* church can turn our nation back to God!

Paul tells us that it is the *apostasy* of the *church* that *prepares the way* for "*the Man of Sin*" (*II Thess. 2:3*). Communism could never have arisen in Russia if it had not been for the *vacuum* left by the *corrupted* and *apostate* (and without spiritual power) condition of the Russian Orthodox Church. The same is true in other countries that were taken over by this disease. Also why a number of countries of Europe will yet fall to the Bestial system is because *the church* has *failed*. I have read statements by those who know the conditions in Europe; that Europe is the new "dark continent" as far as Christianity is concerned – only 4% or less of the population attends church in some countries. Greece years ago elected a member of the Socialist party as head of their country. Socialism and Communism are "kissin' cousins." They both have the same basic philosophy; the difference is only a matter of *degree*. Communists teach that countries not taken over (for Communism) by violent revolution must go through the "evolutionary process" of Socialism in order to reach Communism (which they believe is the ultimate state of Socialism). France also elected a Socialist premiere years ago.

I try to keep informed on the above, as well as other evils (symptoms) that permeate our disease-ridden society. I am concerned that Christians are *not as informed* as they *should be* about the growing evils that threaten our nation. We are to be informed enough to WARN, but we are not to get "caught up" in and preoccupied with symptoms rather than majoring on *solutions*. *Get preoccupied with Christ and His Word!* (This is going to happen as the Spirit of God continues to move,

especially after the “latter rain” outpouring.)

For some time the Lord has been dealing with me to share some thoughts on what I consider to be one of the most commonly accepted *errors* being perpetuated by teachers of Bible prophecy today. It is expressed in a statement which I recently read in one of the most widely circulated prophecy periodicals current today: “No truth is more certain in Bible prophecy than the revival of the old Roman Empire For centuries, the vast majority of Bible scholars have steadfastly believed that the up-coming Antichrist will arise out of the Revived Roman Empire.” This statement only accentuates that which I heard a number of years ago that “*tradition sticks worse than sin.*” It is much *easier* for Bible scholars and teachers to *perpetuate traditions* than to *study afresh* what the Word of God teaches. This is why the Christian church world is in such *confusion* and *division*.

That there is to be an end-time beast system is clear from what is described in **Revelation 13**. The 7 heads and 10 horns of this beast seems to indicate that it will be a union of 17 nations into an anti-Christ system which will *seek* to dominate the world. Let us look at the traditional “rationale” that the end-time “beast” power will be a “revived Roman Empire.” The Prophet Daniel, one of the Jewish exiles in Babylon, was given a dream-vision by God (**Dan. 7**) of four great beasts that arose out of the sea. He was given to understand that these beasts represented four *Gentile world empires* which would *exercise dominion* over the civilized world (and over the Jews) *until* the Messiah would come (the “*Son of man*” – **7:13**); *then* He would receive the dominion, glory and kingdom, and all peoples, nations and languages would serve Him (**7:14**). The four world-empires represented by the four beasts were Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome. Rome (the fourth and last) held sway and also dominated the Holy Land when Jesus the Messiah came into the world. Prophecy students

“reasoned” that since Daniel’s beasts out of the sea were but *FOUR* (no more), that there would be *no other* world kingdom arising. But since other prophecies give evidence (especially *Rev. 13*) there is to be an end-time kingdom of global scope before Jesus’ second coming, it was concluded that such would have to be a *revived* Roman one (in order not to make a fifth).

Now I will point out the error of this concept, as well as to give the Scriptural answer to this dilemma. When the Israelites entered the land of Canaan, God expected them to bring forth “fruit”: both for “home consumption” and for “export.” When Jesus the Messiah came, it was time for “harvest”; HE came looking for fruit, but found none (*Lk. 13:6-9*). Moreover, the “keepers” (stewards) of the Kingdom-vineyard, cast Him out and killed Him. (See *Matt. 21:33-41*.) “*He came unto His own, and His own received Him not*” (*Jn. 1:11*). Had His own people *accepted* Him, the *fullness* of the covenant (and Kingdom) would have been theirs to reap, and the Messiah-Deliverer (and Judge) would have dispatched the Roman legions, and the *FOURTH* (the Roman) kingdom would have been the *LAST* Gentile world empire. But a righteous God could not bring judgment upon a Gentile people who knew Him not, when His own chosen people slew and cast Him out. So He “lifted” the Kingdom-stewardship “mantle” from Abraham’s seed after the flesh and placed it upon the spiritual heirs of the promise, even the seed and children of Abraham by FAITH (*Gal. 3:7,9,29*), who *WOULD bring forth fruit* desired by the vineyard owner (God), in time (“in their seasons” – *Matt. 21:41*), which would involve a period of around 2,000 years. Accordingly “judgment” *ALSO* had to *wait* for the Gentiles (the Roman Empire and other Gentile nations which would arise), as well as *final* judgment on the Jew.

NOW, in order to get the FULL and FINAL picture of

world events before Christ returns, and of the FINAL FORM of Gentile world power which God will judge, we must go to the New Testament to the **Book of Revelation**, in which we have *added revelation* given by the glorified Christ *beyond* that which was seen by Daniel. The “Revived Roman Empire” theorists saw the “beast” of **Revelation 13** as “Rome revived” with the 10 horns of **Revelation 13:1** the same as the 10 horns of **Daniel 7:20,24**, postulating a union of 10 nations of *western* Europe (in the geographical area of the old Roman Empire), and which is finding its fulfillment in what was known as the “Common Market” but now called the European Union (E.U.). This, they said, was the final beast over which the Anti-Christ will rule. The *absolute fallacy* of this thinking will be shown as we proceed. I often ask the question: “If the Jewish Prophets were given the total picture of God’s prophetic plan of the future, why would Jesus (the greatest Prophet of all) be given additional details recorded in the **Book of Revelation (Rev. 1:1)**?”

First, just because Daniel’s fourth beast had ten horns (**Dan. 7:7,20,24**), and John’s beast of **Revelation 13** also has ten horns (**Rev. 13:1**) does not make the latter the “revival” of the former. A careful examination of the **Revelation 13** beast shows *vast differences* from Daniel’s fourth beast. However, the “*latter day stage*” of what has been a long evolutionary process of the “Roman Empire” IS INVOLVED in John’s beast of **Revelation 13**, but NOT in the sense that is postulated by the “revived Roman Empire” theorists.

Secondly, in **Revelation 13**, we actually see *two* beasts. After describing the first in **Revelation 13:1-10**, John says in **13:11** “*and I beheld another beast.*” A careful examination shows the second is merely a “front” for the first, and thus in a sense they are ONE powerful beastly force with ONE and the same aim, varying only in tactics. Yet, because John says “another beast,” for the sake of “count” we must distinguish the

two. When we “add up” by count the four beasts of Daniel’s vision, and the two beasts of John’s vision, we have a total of six. In God’s symbolic language, 6 is the number of MAN. (Adam was created on the 6th day; in the Law, God gave man 6 days to do all *his work*, etc.) So it is not unusual that during the historical period known as the “*times of the Gentiles*” (**Lk. 21:24**), which began when Babylon (the first of Daniel’s four beasts **Dan. 7:4**) took Jerusalem under king Nebuchadnezzar and *initiated* Jerusalem’s “treading down,” until the “*fullness of the Gentiles be come in*” (**Rom. 11:25**) at the close of this age, that there are six Gentile beast powers which *have had* or *will have* their part in the “treading down” of Jerusalem.

Third, to understand how the “Roman Empire” fits into the end-time beast picture, we must go back into history and understand that there actually *was* a “revival” of the Roman Empire that is with us even to this day. In addition, we will never understand the endtime role of Rome until we are made aware of the fact that in its “evolutionary development” the Roman Empire became divided into two distinct parts: the *Western* Roman Empire and the *Eastern* Roman Empire. This is pictured by the *two legs* of iron in the image of Nebuchadnezzar’s dream which Daniel interpreted as recorded in **Daniel 2**. This division took place in the Fourth century A.D. The Empire had become so vast in size, that effective administration of its more distant provinces became increasingly difficult. Therefore, under the reign of Constantine, the Eastern Division, or Greek-Roman Empire was formed. Its capitol was Constantinople (named after Constantine) and was located in what is present day Turkey. The present name of the city is Istanbul. Eventually, along the same lines of division between the western and eastern sections of the Roman Empire was the *church divided*. Basically, it involved the rise of the “Papacy,” to which the Eastern Church would not submit.

Now we are ready for the KEY to the question of “Rome,” its “revival,” its historical development, and HOW it fits into the end-time pattern of prophetic events and the “Beast” system. In the 4th and 5th centuries, the Western Roman Empire showed increasing signs of decay. The populace, softened by luxurious living, had lost its one-time vigor. War-like tribes from the north swept down, making devastating inroads.

Though Rome tried to ward off her assailants, her foes gave her no respite and in 476 A.D., the Imperial Empire passed into history. However, at the same time that Imperial Rome was decaying, simultaneously a new power was rising within her borders. The Church, headed by the Papacy, was becoming a great organized religious, ecclesiastical, and political force. The “irony” (if, indeed, that is a proper word to use; perhaps “tragedy” would be a more apt description) of the spread of Christianity throughout the Roman Empire, and the eventual recognition of it as an “accepted” religion was followed swiftly by Constantine’s elevation of Christianity as the “official” religion of the Roman Empire. And, the “adulterous marriage” of church and state was the fact that not only did the church “Christianize” Rome, but in process of time, Rome “*Romanized*” the church! Long before Imperial Rome fell, the church was *increasingly taking the form, the accouterments, the trappings* – yes, even many of the *doctrines, practices, and customs* – of the pagan Roman Empire. Its ecclesiastical hierarchy was in the “image” or likeness of the political structure of Rome, even to the vesting of one man (akin to the Emperor) with the supreme authority over the church – the “Pontifex Maximus” – the “chief” of all the priests of the hierarchical structure, called the “Pope” (papa). Here we are ready to relate what happened when Imperial Rome fell.

When Imperial Rome fell, the “scepter” of the Roman Empire passed to the church. Fisher’s *HISTORY OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH* says on page 95:

"During all the dark days, when Rome and Christian Italy were given over by the weakness of the emperors to the ravages of the barbarians, the Roman Bishop was fearless in defense of the city ... facing all dangers and assuming all responsibilities The sceptre which fell from the feeble hand of the Emperor, was grasped by him and his successors. Rome in the loss of her old Empire found a new and more lasting dominion."

Thus the church and the Papacy, as a great ecclesiastical-political power, *began to supersede that of the Caesars*, and the idea of the Empire continued to be *firmly established* in the *mind* of the Church. At the earliest opportunity, the Papacy planned and *actually did restore the Empire to its former Imperial and temporal pattern*. This basic fact is emphasized repeatedly by history. Quoting the *ENCYCLOPEDIA BRITANNICA*:

"*The Empire was now the Church*; it was now indeed indestructible for, if it perished as an empire, it would live as a church. But the Church made it certain that it would not perish as an empire for many centuries to come." (*Emphasis mine. – L.E.*)

It is important to understand that the "*heredity power*" of the Roman Empire – Daniel's fourth "Beast" – *fell to the church*, which had as already demonstrated, become "Romanized." The "beast" of pagan Rome became the "beast" of Papal Rome. After becoming "Christianized" (even though a greatly corrupted form of Christianity), Rome became THE people to "evangelize" vast areas of the world. This required going *beyond* the boundaries of the old Roman Empire. Through the church – "Rome" – the fourth of Daniel's Beasts *extended its dominion* and *conferred its identity* upon the tribes, people, and nations that it "evangelized" and eventually dominated. Wherever the Roman Church went, there went the Roman Empire. THAT in a "nutshell" explains the "*extension*" and *present existence* of Daniel's fourth Beast – the Roman. And it also *eliminates* the "necessity" (as some teach) of a revived Roman Empire within the confines of the geo-

graphical limits of the old pagan Imperial Roman Empire.

We cannot leave this subject without briefly delineating how the same pattern developed in the *eastern* section of the Roman Empire. After the fall of Western Rome in 476 A.D., the Eastern Roman Empire continued to exist and flourish nearly a 1,000 years more. The Roman Empire “lived on” in the East, and *Constantinople* became the “*Second Rome*,” as its center and capitol. As in the west, so in the east, the church *succumbed* to the same temptations to build a powerful ecclesiastical-political superstructure patterned after the fashion of the Roman Empire, being “meshed” increasingly into the fabric of Roman life and customs, due to the illicit “marriage” of church and state years previously, before the division of east and west became a political and religious reality. Although *similarly apostatized* by pagan doctrines, practices, and customs, the main difference from the western church was that the bishops of the eastern sections of the Church *refused* to vest final and absolute authority in *one* supreme bishop. They *refused* to recognize the Bishop of Rome (later referred to as the “Pope” – “papa”) as the *supreme head of all Christendom*. They had several “patriarchs” (a church dignitary superior to an archbishop) who had jurisdiction over specific geographical districts (usually along nationalistic lines). These Patriarchs were regarded in theory as “equals” in church authority, although in dignity and influence the Patriarch at Constantinople overshadowed the others because of his position in that “new center and capitol” of Imperial Rome.

We must now look at the *same historical KEY* in the East, as that which unraveled the “mystery” of Daniel’s fourth Beast and Rome in the West. Before doing that, let me make a point which exists to this day: the Western Church chose to incorporate the word “Roman” in its official title, which exists to this day: the “Roman Catholic Church.” However, in the East the Church did not incorporate the “Roman” word, being desig-

nated traditionally as the "Eastern Orthodox Church," and more specifically, when referring to various sections of "patriarchates," as the "Greek Orthodox Church," the "Russian Orthodox Church," the Serbian, etc. Even so, the "Romanized" character of the Eastern Church must not be overlooked just because the word "Roman" was not used in official Church names or titles. For several hundred years the Church was one organization – one system – developing the same "Romanized" characteristics. Division came after its basic nature was fixed.

The preceding point is so important, because we are going to see that what happened in the Western Roman Empire, was repeated in the East. The Eastern Roman Empire came to an end in the year 1453, when rising Turkish power swept into its capitol city, Constantinople. An important aftermath of this event, recorded by history but often overlooked by students of prophecy, is simply this: as when Western Rome fell, the Church survived – even so when Eastern Rome fell, the Church survived. Quoting from the *ENCYCLOPEDIA BRITANNICA*:

"Yet as when Rome fell, the Catholic Church survived, and ultimately found for itself a new Empire of the West, so when Constantinople fell, the *Orthodox Church* continued its life, and found for itself a new Empire of the East - the *Empire of Russia*. Under Ivan the Great (1462-1505), Moscow became the metropolis of Orthodoxy; Byzantine law influenced his code and he took for his cognizance the double-headed eagle. Ivan the Terrible, his grandson, finally assumed the title of Tsar in 1547; and henceforth the *Russian emperor is*, in theory, and very largely in fact, *the successor of the Old Eastern Roman emperor.*" (Emphasis added by me – L.E.)

Here is an astonishing footnote to the history of the Roman Empire. According to the record of history, *Russia* under the *Czars*, became the *heir* to the traditions, religion, and power of the *Eastern Roman Empire*.

As we have seen, because the Jews refused to accept their

Messiah, final judgment upon both Jew and Gentile had to wait for an entire “age.” But God’s plans cannot be frustrated. There is a PARALLEL between the way God *continued* His plan for “Israel,” and the way He *extended* the “reign” of Daniel’s fourth Beast. God went beyond the earthly Jew by lifting the “mantle” of “Israel” from the earthly seed of Abraham, and placed it upon the *spiritual heirs* of the promises, the seed of Abraham *by faith* (**Gal. 3:8-9,14,29**). As God went *beyond* the earthly Jew and the geographical limits of the land of Palestine to implement His promises, even so did He *extend* the influence *and* earthly boundaries of the Roman Empire by causing its “mantle” and hereditary power to pass to the Romanized Church (Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox). Thus “Rome” is with us to this day; Daniel’s fourth Beast, *by extension*, still exists. By the historical facts herein presented, *even Russia* can be *reckoned* as a part of the FOURTH Beastly empire of Daniel’s vision. There needs to be no “Revived Roman Empire.” Furthermore, I will give Biblical evidence as we proceed that the final Beast power of this age and the one who heads it probably comes out of the *east*, NOT out of Western Europe.

When we read the description of the Beast as recorded in **Revelation 13:1-10**, we are immediately made aware of the fact that it is a *composite* of all of the Beasts which Daniel saw in his vision: the lion, the bear, the leopard, and the dragon. Thus this final Beast form gathers into itself ALL the “hereditary powers” of the preceding Gentile world empires – the Babylonian (lion), the Medo-Persian (bear), the Grecian (leopard), and the Roman (dragon). Actually, when we read in **Daniel 7** concerning the fourth (Roman) beast which Daniel saw, Daniel does not give it a *specific* name as he does the three preceding beasts. Quoting from **Daniel 7:7**:

“After this I saw in the night visions, and behold a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible...and it was diverse

from all the beasts that were before it; and it had ten horns."

However, since in **Revelation 13**, in describing the beast which John saw, he *identifies* the *first three* beasts which Daniel saw, with the exact names that Daniel gives, it seems logical to conclude that John's vision on the "composite" beast would *include* the *fourth*, and that what Daniel saw was actually a *dragon*, even though he does not name it, but simply says that it was "*diverse from all the beasts that were before it.*"

I realize that the "dragon" is a symbol of Satan (**Rev. 12:7-9**), but ALSO, the *Beast* which John describes in his vision is referred to as a "*dragon*" (**Rev. 12:3**). This Beast is seen first in **Revelation 12**, and is described more fully in **Revelation 13**, then again in **Revelation 17**.

Now I want to focus in on **Revelation 13:2**. Since this best is described as a "composite" of ALL the Gentile world empire "beasts" which are seen in **Daniel 7**, we must conclude that this final end-time Beast gathers into itself *all* of the "*hereditary powers*" of those previous beasts *put together*. Follow what I write very closely, to see something very unusual that is described about the "dragon" of the fourth (Roman) Beast in **Revelation 13:2**, which I believe explains the "mystery" of how the "Roman Empire" fits into the prophetic picture of this end time. We have already examined the testimony of history that although "Imperial Rome" came to an end in both west and east, that its "mantle" was transferred to the "Romanized" church, and through the instrumentality of the church, the "beast" of Imperial, pagan Rome, became the "beast" of Romanized Christendom. Vaulting the geographical limits of its old empire, *Rome's life was extended and expanded* as the Church picked up its "scepter" and conferred its identity on peoples and nations that it evangelized and dominated. This took place in Russia, where the Eastern Orthodox Church founded a "new Rome" of the East, and the *Czars of*

Russia became the *successors* of the *Caesars of Rome*. Where did Communism first gain a firm grip? In Russia, of course. With this in mind, the latter statement of **Revelation 13:2** becomes intriguing. It says that “*the dragon* (symbolic of the Roman Empire) *gave him* (the Beast) *his power, and his seat, and great authority.*” The word translated “seat” in this passage is the Greek word *thronos*, which actually means *a throne*, but by implication “a stately seat,” “power,” or a “potentate.” Whether the Czars of Russia had “thrones” or not, I do not know – but it makes little difference, for the idea is the same: when Communism took over in Russia, the representative of the “Roman dragon” had to *give* his seat of power and authority to the new rulers. The Czar was also the *legal head* of the Russian Orthodox Church, so that power was also *surrendered*. When the Bolsheviks took over, they confiscated church lands, cancelled state subsidies for the Church, decreed civil marriage, and nationalized schools. The Orthodox Church *Patriarch* had to declare himself *loyal* to the new regime. In order to promote atheism, in time the church was gradually destroyed, Christians suffered intense persecution, and thousands of clergymen were imprisoned or liquidated by this monstrous “beast” of Communism. (Since the fall of the Soviet Empire, a state of confusion and almost anarchy has made the ground fertile for a new, “improved” version of Bestial rule.)

Thus, the Beast of **Revelation 13:1-10**, instead of being a “revived Roman Empire” actually *absorbs* and *incorporates* what is left of Roman Empire *into itself*, actually “taking over” and “*supplanting*” its former power and authority. I have described what took place in the *main* “Roman” stronghold in the *east*. Shortly, I will explain how the same is *going* to happen in the *West*. But first, I want you to take note of the fact that the **Revelation 13** Beast has *seven heads* and *ten horns* (**13:1**). Daniel’s fourth Beast had only one head but ten horns, so the two *cannot* be identical. However, I have been showing how Daniel’s fourth Beast (the Roman) becomes a part of

the **Revelation 13** Beast. In **Revelation 12:2** we read that the seven heads are “crowned,” and in **Revelation 13:1** (later), the ten horns are also “crowned,” making a total of 17 entities (nations) that make up this final Beast power. “Crowning” would indicate the act of becoming an *official part* (through acting governmental officials) of the Beast system. By **Revelation 12:1-5** we note that the heads are “crowned” *before* the “Man child” is caught up to the Throne of God. Since this “Man child” symbolizes “overcoming sons of God” who are to be translated to glorified bodies before the Tribulation, this means that the seven head nations are *fully integrated* as a part of the Beast system *before* the translation takes place. The ten horns are integrated into the system later, no doubt during the early part of the Tribulation.

Note that **Revelation 13:1** says that *upon the seven heads* were “the names of blasphemy.” The Greek word for “blasphemy” means *to vilify, to speak impiously against, to defame, rail on, revile, speak evil of*. Here is a bold declaration of what happens in these “head” nations: they *turn from Christ to an anti-God, anti-Christian philosophy or religion*. Thus the process of the “Roman Beast” (Daniel’s fourth) is to go from Pagan Imperialism, to Romanized Christendom, and finally to some form of global, anti-Christian philosophies (this final phase not being completed yet). An official part of the Bestial doctrinaire is the *vilification of religion, especially Christ and Christianity*. It is tragic to see nations that were once “evangelized” to Christ, and embracing Christianity (even though in somewhat corrupted forms) being snared into an atheistic, blasphemous Bestial philosophy. The only possible explanation is that the “Christianity” in these nations, which is *supposed* to be SALT (penetrating and preserving them for Christ) has “*lost its savour*”; thus being “*good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men*” (**Matt. 5:13**).

As pointed out before, the seven heads are “crowned” be-

fore the “Man child” is translated. And because I believe that the translation of the “overcoming saints” is close at hand, it seems logical to conclude that the seven head nations are already “crowned” and officially a part of the Beast system.

I have already presented conclusively the historical perspective that Rome’s influence and/or identity expanded through the instrumentality of the “Romanized” church. We saw that Russia was the main Roman “seat of power” in the east when it yielded up its authority to the Communist Beast. We pointed out earlier that the Greek word for “seat” in *Revelation 13:2* is *thronos*, which means *throne*, but also by extension any “seat of authority.” Yet, there is one remaining Roman “throne” in the West that is located in the “heart” of that which is sometimes referred to as the “eternal city” – Rome itself. That is the *Papal Throne*. We cannot separate Daniel’s fourth Beast from the Roman Catholic Church, for the testimony of history has already been cited that the power of the Caesars was superseded by the Church. Quoting again from the *ENCYCLOPEDIA BRITANNICA*:

“The Empire was now the Church; it was now indeed indestructible for, it if perished as an empire, it would live as a church.”

This means, that as the *eastern* “seat” was yielded up to the Beast of Communism when *Russia* and the *Eastern Orthodox Church* was taken over, so could the *western* “seat” (throne) be taken over by a Bestial philosophy; and that means *Italy*, the *Vatican*, and the “*Papal Throne*.”

This is how I believe it will happen. After the Firstfruits have been translated, and the Pope, all the Cardinals, Bishops, and all the rest of the ecclesiastical hierarchy, have been *left behind*; and it becomes fully evident to the people of Italy that God indeed has literally taken (by translation) a people out of this world, and that their own Church leadership is still with them – still firmly on earth “in the flesh” – it will suddenly

dawn on them that they have been “betrayed” by the “*mother of harlots*” (*Rev. 17:5*). Their “blind” faith in the Church will be shattered; they will begin to realize that they have “missed the boat,” so to speak. Uncontrolled rage will grip the masses; mobs will roam the streets. The Bestial elements, already strong in Italy, will “seize” the opportunity to take the lead in suggesting an open attack upon the Church and its leaders. A “flood” of vilification and propaganda will pour forth (see *Rev. 12:15*). The Vatican will be sacked and burned. But I believe God will have mercy on the Pope and a few of his close advisers. They will likely be flown by helicopter from the Vatican to the airport where they will board a plane to fly them to a place of safety – likely to the United States. The “two wings” of a great EAGLE (a symbol of the USA) could suggest it will be an American airplane. The Lord will also have mercy on the truly devout among the Catholics in Italy, as they will likely be among those who will receive visitations by the translated, glorified Firstfruits saints six days after their disappearance. This is the literal meaning of the expression in *Revelation 12:16* that the “earth” opened her mouth and helped the “woman” (those who are a part of the true body of Christ). The glorified saints will appear in their glorified earth bodies of flesh and bone (see *Lk. 24:39*) and “open their mouths” to give comfort and direction. This, of course, will happen to devout Christians all over the world, but I am focusing on Italy for a purpose.

The point is simply this. In the aftermath of the chaos and bloodbath that will destroy the Vatican and completely disrupt the Catholic Church in Italy, the nation will likely be *taken over* by the Beast. The persecution of the Church (especially the clergy) will be intense. Likely it will take only a few months until Italy receives her “crown” and officially becomes a “horn” in the Beast system. The Roman “dragon” will have yielded up its power, its “seat” (throne), and great authority to the Beast (*Rev. 13:26*). A similar “chain of events” will be taking place

in Greece, for Greece is the one remaining stronghold the Eastern Orthodox branch of the Church which inherited the "mantle" of the Roman Empire. When the Firstfruit-saints are translated, the Greek Patriarch and all the church potentates will remain behind. The populace will be in great consternation and confusion as they realize that they have been deceived by the Eastern "remnant" of the "mother of harlots." It will likely take a little longer, but *Greece too* will fall to *the Beast*, receive her "crown" and officially become another "horn" in the Beast system. Although *not* likely to become an integral part of the 17 nation "head" and "horn" Beast system, there will be other European countries largely Catholic in religion that will be overcome by the Beast, maybe such as Spain, Portugal, Austria, and Belgium. Some European nations, although *not* taken over by the Beast; will be virtually *neutralized* as far as any effective resistance to the Bestial encroachment into Europe.

In light of the total historical and prophetic pattern which I have presented in this presentation, where is there any "*room*" or *need* for a "revived Roman Empire" in Europe. *Rather* than a strong, united Europe, as a final Roman Empire Beast ruled over by a mighty "Anti-Christ" who will dominate the whole world, just the opposite will take place. Europe will be *fractionalized, broken up, and greatly decimated*. There is considerably more that I could present to complete (as best I can) this end-time picture of the "Beast System" and what I believe is going to happen, but space prohibits here.